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ABSTRACT

The paper reports on a study of faculty work attitudes which was conducted to determine ways in which the work environment at the Hope School for Blind, Multi-Handicapped Children in Springfield, Illinois could be modified in ways that would lead to improved faculty morale. The study focused on two areas that are generally accepted as critical to maintaining high levels of morale among staff: the actual characteristics of the work environment at Hope School, and the attitudes of the faculty toward their work. Faculty attitudes were obtained by means of a personal interview, a work characteristics questionnaire, and an attitudinal questionnaire. It was speculated that the high attrition rate among teachers and support staff who work with severely disabled children both nationally and at Hope School was in part due to psychological demands which the children make on the faculty. Aspects covered in the report include procedures used in data collection, methodology, data analyses and interpretation, and recommendations for changes within Hope School. (DLS)

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# A STUDY OF WORK ATTITUDES AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS AT THE HOPE SCHOOL FOR BLIND, MULTI-HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

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## INTRODUCTION AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this evaluation was to determine ways in which the work environment at the Hope School for Blind, Multi-Handicapped Children in Springfield, Illinois could be modified in ways which would lead to improved morale among the faculty. The Director of the School and the Director of the West Central Regional Program for Handicapped Children speculated that the high attrition rate among teachers and support staff who work with severely disabled children nationally and at Hope School specifically was, in part, due to psychological demands which these children make on the faculty. In order to compensate for these demands and thus hopefully increase employment stability, certain work conditions must be present.

The evaluation focused on two areas that are generally accepted as critical to maintaining high levels of morale among staff: 1) the actual characteristics of the work environment and 2) the attitude of the faculty toward their work. The following report describes the procedures which were followed in collecting the data, the methodology used to probe faculty, the data analyses and an interpretation of those data and a set of recommendations for changes within the school.

The report is written in non-technical language. In cases where specific statistical terminology is used or where terminology unique to special education or related disciplines may be ambiguous to persons outside the field, it is explained in layman's terms.

The evaluation process itself occurred over several phases. The first or preliminary phase involved several meetings with the Director of Hope School and/or the Director of the West Central Region to determine the scope of the evaluation and the suitability of the developed questionnaires. In all, the first phase was completed over a series of three meetings.

The second phase of the evaluation involved administration of the surveys and interviews with the respondents and the Director of the Hope School. This phase was carried out in two separate visits to the school. The first visit involved administering to the teaching staff the survey of working characteristics. The second visit involved administering the attitude survey and conducting individual or small group interviews with the teaching staff and Director.

The third phase involved analysis of the data from the two surveys and formulation of the Final Report on the evaluation process. The remainder of this report presents the two questionnaires used in the evaluation, the results of each questionnaire and the interviews, presented separately, and conclusions and recommendations based on the combined results. The evaluators wish to make clear to the readers of this report that there was skepticism among the teachers and teacher-aides toward the investigators regarding the conduct of the investigation, the confidentiality of their responses and the ability of the investigators to report the findings in a frank and unambiguous way. Precautions were taken to protect the confidentiality of the information provided by the participants and we can only state it has, in fact, remained confidential. We feel the report itself provides the best evidence of the thoroughness of the investigation. Although the evaluation should not be viewed as total, it can, and we feel does, provide a solid basis for continued evaluation directed at continued improvement of the Hope School.

## RESULTS OF THE WORK-CHARACTERISTICS QUESTIONNAIRE

A 24-item questionnaire was administered to 21 teachers and teacher's aides. The purpose of the questionnaire was to generate data which would provide a picture of the working conditions existent in the educational setting at Hope School. The 24-items addressed three areas: faculty characteristics including length of service, classroom characteristics including the number of children they teach, and support services including the availability of consultants. The questionnaire was administered to the faculty members by the evaluators in a two-hour session. Faculty members were allowed to interact with each other and encouraged to ask questions of the evaluators concerning any of the items.

The responses to the questionnaire were analyzed and are reported in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 presents the raw or actual data provided by the respondents. The data are reported in frequency scores and percentages. The frequency score represents the actual number of faculty members who responded to any one of the items. The percentage score represents the number of faculty members responding to a given item in relation to the total number of respondents. For example, in Question #1 (length of time you have taught at the school), 15 faculty members stated that they had taught at Hope School for at least a month but not longer than two years. The 15 faculty members represented 71% of the total number of faculty members responding to this question. On this particular question, that total number was 21 faculty members. Again with regard to Question #1, four faculty members or 19% stated that they had worked at Hope School for at least two years but not more than four years. While 21 faculty members participated in this aspect of the total evaluation, not all faculty members responded to each question as is the case with Question #2 (length of time your class

has been operational). As the reader can see, the frequency scores do not total 21, but rather total 19. Thus the percentages reported for each question are based on the faculty members who responded to each specific question. It should be pointed out that fewer than 21 responses, or the total number of faculty members participating, to any given question was the exception and not the rule.

Table 2 is a summary of the data obtained from Questionnaire #1. The data are reported as modal scores. A modal score represents the majority response to a given item as opposed to a mean or average score. The modal score is more meaningful in this evaluation because, for the most part, the items are mutually exclusive of each other and do not fall on a continuous scale. For example, Question #5 (number of students in your classroom) was answered by 62% of the faculty members as more than 11. The remaining 38% of the faculty members responded to that question by selecting one of the other four remaining answers. We do suggest that the readers of this report not depend solely on the modal scores for interpreting the results of the questionnaire but also view the complete data in Table 1.

Before the results of Questionnaire #1 are reported, the reader needs to be advised that some of the data presented in Tables 1 and 2 require clarification because they appear to be anomolous. With respect to Question #4, many students are seen by more than one of the classroom teachers. This is especially obvious in the 6-10 and 11-15 year old age groups. Therefore, the number of students seen by the faculty members will not equal the total student population of Hope School. This fact then will prevent the reporting of any percentage scores as there is no way to identify an absolute number necessary to derive a percentage score. For Questions 11, 12, 13, 14 and 19, the results were not clarified by reporting frequency scores, therefore the reporting of percentage scores is sufficient.

Based on the data provided by the respondents, it is clear that a large percentage of the faculty members (71%) have been employed for a rather short period of time (less than two years) and an even larger percentage (81%) have been teaching in their particular classroom for the same period of time (Questions #1 and #3). The students they teach are mostly adolescents (62%) or very young children (29%) (Question #5). The faculty members characterize their classrooms as growth and development in type (67%) as opposed to academic (14%) and they spend from 6-8 hours per day on education, growth and development activities (71%) (Questions #6 and #9). A large percentage of faculty members receive support services from psychologists (81%), physical therapists (100%) and other teachers (100%), with some faculty members receiving pediatric (14%), social work (24%), speech therapy (48%), audiological (5%) and parent (43%) services (Question #15). However, the responses to Question #22 indicate that the support services are available to them. The faculty to student ratio is generally 1:2 - 1:4 (76%) and all classrooms have teacher-aides present along with the classroom teacher or teachers.

Most of the faculty members (71%) indicate that they do not have the opportunity to attend workshops (Question #24) and that in order to improve their services to their students, in-service should be given the highest priority (76%) (Question #23).

TABLE 1:
RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTERED TO TEACHERS AND TEACHERS' AIDES REGARDING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THEIR PARTICULAR WORK ENVIRONMENT (N-21)

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Length of time you have taught at the school | | |
| a. 1 month - 2 years | 15 | 71 |
| b. 2-4 years | 4 | 19 |
| c. 4-6 years | 1 | 5 |
| d. more than 6 years | 1 | 5 |
| 2. Length of time your class has been operational | | |
| a. 1 month - 2 years | 7 | 33 |
| b. 2-4 years | 1 | 5 |
| c. 4-6 years | 0 | 0 |
| d. more than 6 years | 11 | 52 |
| 3. Length of time you have been teaching your class | | |
| a. 1 month - 2 years | 17 | 81 |
| b. 2-4 years | 1 | 10 |
| c. 4-6 years | 1 | 5 |
| d. more than 6 years | 1 | 5 |
| 4. What age group of children do you teach? In each age range in which you have students, indicate the number of students. | | |
| a. birth to 5 years | 0 | - |
| b. 2-3 years | 0 | - |
| c. 3-5 years | 0 | - |
| d. 6-10 years | 50 | - |
| e. 11-15 years | 192 | - |
| f. 16-20 years | 176 | - |
| g. 20-25 years | 40 | - |
| h. 26-30 years | 0 | - |

5. What is the total student population in your classroom?

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| a. less than 3 | 0 | 0 |
| b. 3-5 | 6 | 29 |
| c. 6-8 | 0 | 0 |
| d. 9-11 | 2 | 10 |
| e. more than 11 | 13 | 62 |

6. Which of the following terms best describes your classroom?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. day care | 0 | 0 |
| b. medical | 0 | 0 |
| c. growth and development | 14 | 67 |
| d. academic | 3 | 14 |
| e. other | 4 | 19 |

7. How many weeks per year does your classroom operate?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. 32-36 | 1 | 5 |
| b. 36-40 | 4 | 19 |
| c. 40-44 | 3 | 14 |
| d. 44-48 | 2 | 10 |
| e. 48-52 | 11 | 52 |

8. How many hours per day does your program operate?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. less than 2 | 0 | 0 |
| b. 2-4 | 0 | 0 |
| c. 4-6 | 5 | 24 |
| d. 6-8 | 16 | 76 |
| e. 8-10 | 0 | 0 |
| f. more than 10 | 0 | 0 |

9. How many hours of each program day are set aside for education, growth and development activities?

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| a. less than 2 | 0 | 0 |
| b. 2-4 | 0 | 0 |
| c. 4-6 | 6 | 29 |
| d. 6-8 | 15 | 71 |
| e. 8-10 | 0 | 0 |
| f. more than 10 | 0 | 0 |

10. What is the average number of hours you see each child per day in your classroom?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. less than 2 | 7 | 33 |
| b. 2-4 | 7 | 33 |
| c. 4-6 | 0 | 0 |
| d. 6-8 | 7 | 33 |
| e. 8-10 | 0 | 0 |
| f. more than 10 | 0 | 0 |

11. Are children integrated into the following programs in your school?

| | YES | NO |
|---|---|---|
| a. Total program | 67% | 33% |
| b. Physical activities | 57% | 43% |
| c. Pre-academic | 52% | 48% |
| d. Other | 48% | 52% |

12. Are there openings for more students in your classroom? YES-62%, NO-38%

13. Do you maintain a waiting list? YES - 0%, NO - 100%

14. Does each child receive an educational assessment/evaluation upon entering your classroom: YES - 95%, NO - 5%

15. Indicate each party that participates in the educational assessment/evaluation.

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| a. Psychologist | 17 | 81 |
| b. Pediatrician | 3 | 14 |

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| c. Social Worker | 5 | 24 |
| d. Speech Therapist | 10 | 48 |
| e. Audiologist | 1 | 5 |
| f. Physical Therapist | 21 | 100 |
| g. Occupational Therapist | 0 | 0 |
| h. Teacher | 21 | 100 |
| i. Parent | 9 | 43 |
| j. Other | 7 | 33 |

16. Indicate areas in which educational assessment/evaluation occur.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. language | 18 | 86 |
| b. academics | 15 | 71 |
| c. self-help | 17 | 81 |
| d. socialization | 18 | 86 |
| e. motor | 21 | 100 |

17. How many teachers work in your classroom:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. 0 | 0 | 0 |
| b. 1 | 17 | 81 |
| c. 2 | 1 | 5 |
| d. more than 2 | 0 | 0 |

18. What is the professional (teacher & aide): child ratio in your classroom?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. 1:2 - 1:4 | 16 | 76 |
| b. 1:5 - 1:10 | 4 | 19 |
| c. 1:11 - 1:15 | 0 | 0 |
| d. Other | 1 | 5 |

19. Are teacher aides used in your classroom:

YES - 100%, NO - 0

20. Indicate any manner in which parents are involved in your program.

| | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|
| a. Advisory Board | 3 | 14 |
| b. Parent Support Groups | 0 | 0 |
| c. Program Development/ Implementation/Evaluation | 4 | 19 |
| d. Other | 5 | 24 |

21. How often do periodic evaluations occur in the educational program?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. daily | 7 | 33 |
| b. weekly | 1 | 5 |
| c. monthly | 2 | 10 |
| d. annually | 1 | 5 |
| e. other | 10 | 48 |

22. Which consultative services are available to you?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| a. Psychological | 21 | 100 |
| b. Medical | 20 | 95 |
| c. Educational | 10 | 48 |
| d. Speech | 20 | 95 |
| e. Audiological | 14 | 67 |
| f. Physical Therapy | 18 | 86 |
| g. Occupational Therapy | 7 | 33 |
| h. University | 11 | 52 |
| i. Other | 2 | 10 |

23. In order to better serve the needs of students in your class, which of the following categories would you need to increase?

| | |
|---|---|
| a. honey | 43 |
| b. food | 5 |
| c. equipment supplies | 38 |
| d. educational materials | 48 |

| | | FREQUENCY | PERCENTAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| e. | teachers | | 10 |
| f. | aides | | 48 |
| g. | administrators | | 33 |
| h. | clerical | | 5 |
| i. | support services (i.e., OT/PT) | | 52% |
| j. | consultants | | 43 |
| k. | in-service | | 76 |
| l. | renovations | | 10 |
| m. | other | | 29 |

24. How often during a school year do you have the opportunity to attend workshops outside your school?

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| a. | never | 15 | 71 |
| b. | once a year | 3 | 14 |
| c. | twice a year | 3 | 14 |

TABLE 2:
MODAL SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE REGARDING THE CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIVIDUAL WORK ENVIRONMENTS

| | QUESTION | RESPONSE | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Years of service | 1 month - 2 years | 71 |
| 2. | Length of time class has been operational | more than 6 years | 52 |
| 3. | Length of time in present classroom | 1 month - 2 years | 81 |
| 4. | Age group of your students | 11-20 years | 80 |
| 5. | Number of students in your classroom | more than 11 | 62 |
| 6. | What is emphasized in your classroom | child growth and development | 67 |
| 7. | How many weeks per year does your classroom operate | 48-52 | 52 |
| 8. | How many hours per day does your classroom operate | 6-8 | 76 |
| 9. | How many hours per day for education, growth & development | 6-8 | 71 |
| 10. | How many hours per day do you see your students | 2-8 | 66 |
| 11. | Are students integrated into other facets of the program | yes<br>no | 56<br>44 |
| 12. | Are there openings for more students in your classroom | yes | 62 |
| 13. | Do you have a waiting list | no | 100 |
| 14. | Do students receive an educational evaluation before entering your classroom | yes | 95 |
| 15. | Who participate in the educational evaluation | physical therapist & teacher | 100 |
| 16. | What areas of development does the evaluation include | motor | 100 |
| 17. | How many teachers work in your classroom | 1 | 81 |

TABLE 2 - continued

| | | RESPONSE | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18. | What is the teacher, teacher aide to child ratio in your classroom | 1:2 - 1:4 | 76 |
| 19. | Are teacher aides used in your classroom | yes | 100 |
| 20. | How are parents used in your program | program development - implementation & evaluation | 19 |
| 21. | How often do evaluations occur | daily | 33 |
| 22. | What consultative services are available to you | psychological, speech & medical | 95-100 |
| 23. | What do you need to improve your program | In-service | 76 |
| 24. | How often do you have the opportunity to attend workshops | never | 71 |

## RESULTS OF THE ATTITUDINAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Approximately one month following the administration of Questionnaire 1 regarding work-environment characteristics, Questionnaire 2, entitled An Inventory of Career Attitudes was administered to the faculty of Hope School. Nineteen of the original 21 faculty members participated in this phase of the evaluation. Questionnaire 2 consisted of 18 items or questions pertaining to the attitude of faculty members toward various aspects of their job including their colleagues, their students, the administration, school policy and themselves.

The format for the administration of Questionnaire 2 followed the format used in administering Questionnaire 1 with the exception that respondents were asked not to interact with each other regarding it. As with the reporting of data from Questionnaire 1, the results of Questionnaire 2 are reported as real scores (Table 3) and modal scores (Table 4). While many of the questions provided answers which were on a continuous scale (e.g., exceptionally low -- exceptionally good) and thus lent themselves to the use of a mean ($\bar{x}$) statistic, the modal statistic was used in order to maintain a consistency with respect to data reporting. However, the modal scores are as equally revealing and interpretable as the mean score. Nevertheless, the reader is cautioned not to rely solely on Table 4 (the summary table which reports modal scores) but rather base interpretations on the data presented in both Table 3 and Table 4. Before the results are reported, the reader should be advised that when a fairly even response-distribution across two or more answers on a given question occurred, range of the responses was reported and the combined scores or number of responses were totaled and reported as one modal score. For example, with question #1 (attitude toward job), 42% of the respondents indicated

that they felt moderately good about their job and 37% indicated they felt neutral. In Table 4, the modal score is reported as 79% and the response as moderately good-neutral. In Table 4, the modal score is reported as 79% and the response as moderately good-neutral. The data were also manipulated in the same way for questions #8, 9, 10, 11, 15 and 17. Question #18 required that respondents rank order items as opposed to selecting one of several possible answers. The responses to question #18 are explained in Table 3 (See Note 1). Finally, it should be pointed out that some respondents failed to answer all the questions. When this occurred, the non-answers were scored as other and are reported in Table 3. The evaluators assumed that failure to respond to a given question was the result of oversight on the part of the respondent or the inadequacy of possible answers to the question.

The results of Questionnaire 2 suggest that the faculty members of Hope School do not feel negative toward their jobs. Only 16% of the responses were of the moderately poor-exceptionally poor type. Most of the respondents (42%) stated that their over-all attitude toward their job was moderately good while a near equal amount (27%) indicated that they had a neutral attitude. Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the respondents indicated that there were two or three factors which affected their job attitude. Most indicated that the position they held as either a teacher or teacher-aide was not a factor (42%) or that if it was a factor, there were other, equally important factors affecting their attitude (32%). Virtually all respondents indicated that their attitudes could be changed (96%) in a significant way and that the realization of financial rewards (42%) would be one of two or three ways to affect attitudinal change. The majority of the faculty members (63%) indicated they viewed themselves as competent to somewhat competent, while no one indicated he felt ineffective or incompetent in his role. None of

the faculty members indicated that it was solely his students who contributed toward his attitude either positively or negatively. The attitude of faculty members toward each other was very good to moderately good (79%), while most of the respondents indicated that their attitude toward the administration was moderately poor (47%). With respect to the school generally, the respondents (85%) indicated that the characteristics of the school were average to moderately good and that the availability of equipment was average to moderately good (79%) as was the material supply (63%). The fact that the Hope School apparently does not have an available or suitable professional library was of no consequence to the respondents. Many of the respondents (32%) indicated that professional enrichment activities were moderately unimportant as contributing to their attitudes, although nearly as many (27%) felt they were moderately important to exceptionally important contributors.

It appears that the faculty members feel good about themselves as teachers and teacher-aides and feel good about each other. They do tend to feel moderately poor toward the school administration and this appears to be in part a function of salary, administrative support for their classroom activities and lack of communication between them and the administration. While 32% of the respondents indicated that the level of administrative support for their classroom activities was moderately high, 64% felt the administration was indifferent or provided moderately low support to them. All of the interpretable responses provided by the faculty members regarding communication between them and the administration indicated that it was at best average (21%), but generally moderately poor (32%) to very poor (37%).

Finally, the faculty members were asked to rank order six important educationally related areas (i.e., teacher staff, support services, administration materials, parent involvement and operation funds) which should be considered for improvement. Sixty-three percent (63%) ranked administration

as either first or second and 37% ranked operation funds as either first or second (question #18).

In order to gain more insight into the attitude of the faculty members toward their work, interview sessions were held with interested faculty members. The sessions were held the same day but following the administration of Questionnaire 2. Nearly all of the 19 faculty members participated, usually in small groups of 2-3 members. The results of those interviews are presented in the next section of this report.

TABLE 3:
RESULTS OF THE
INVENTORY OF CAREER ATTITUDES OF
HOPE SCHOOL FACULTY (N-19)

| FREQUENCY | % | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 1. | My over-all attitude about my job is |
| 0 | 0 | | a. exceptionally good |
| 8 | 42 | | b. moderately good |
| 7 | 37 | | c. neutral |
| 2 | 11 | | d. moderately poor |
| 1 | 5 | | e. exceptionally poor |
| 1 | 5 | | f. other |
| | | 2. | Please check the alternative below which correctly describes your attitude. |
| 0 | 0 | | a. I really don't know what factor(s) contribute significantly to my attitude. |
| 5 | 26 | | b. I know what factors contribute significantly and there are many of them. |
| 13 | 68 | | c. I know what factors contribute significantly and there are relatively few (2 or 3). |
| 1 | 5 | | d. There is a single factor which is basic to my attitude. |
| 0 | 0 | | e. Other |
| | | 3. | Pick out the alternative below which most accurately describes the factor(s) contributing to your attitude. |
| 8 | 42 | | a. financial reward (your salary) or lack of it |
| 5 | 26 | | b. success or lack of it at teaching |
| 2 | 11 | | c. a and b equally |
| 4 | 21 | | d. other |
| | | 4. | Pick out the alternative below which most accurately describes the relationship between your attitude and the nature of your position. The nature of my position (teacher, teacher-aide, other - please specify) |
| 1 | 5 | | a. is the most important factor in my attitude. |
| 6 | 32 | | b. is important, but there are many other factors equally important. |
| 4 | 21 | | c. is a factor, but there are many other factors more important. |
| 8 | 42 | | d. is not a factor in my attitude. |
| 0 | 0 | | e. other |
| | | 5. | Pick out the alternative below which most accurately describes the persons(s) most directly contributing to your morale status. |
| 0 | 0 | | a. your students |
| 2 | 11 | | b. your colleagues |
| 0 | 0 | | c. your supervisor |
| 2 | 11 | | d. director |
| 4 | 21 | | e. a and b equally |
| 0 | 0 | | f. a and c equally |
| 0 | 0 | | g. a and d equally |
| 1 | 5 | | h. b and c equally |
| 1 | 5 | | i. b and d equally |
| 3 | 16 | | j. c and d equally |
| 2 | 11 | | k. a, b, c, and d equally |
| 4 | 21 | | l. other |

| FREQUENCY | % | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | 6. | Pick out the alternative below which most accurately describes the possibilities for a significant change in your attitude. |
| 1 | 5 | | a. There is virtually no chance that my attitude could be changed. |
| 6 | 32 | | b. My attitude could be changed; however, it would take a major change(s) to accomplish this. |
| 6 | 32 | | c. My attitude could be changed significantly with a number of minor changes. |
| 6 | 32 | | d. My attitude could be changed significantly with one or two minor changes. |
| 0 | 0 | | e. My attitude changes significantly from day to day for no obvious reasons. |
| 0 | 0 | | f. Other |
| | | 7. | My attitude toward the administration is |
| 0 | 0 | | a. very good |
| 3 | 16 | | b. moderately good |
| 2 | 11 | | c. indifferent |
| 9 | 47 | | d. moderately poor |
| 2 | 11 | | e. exceptionally poor |
| 3 | 16 | | f. other |
| | | 8. | The level of administrative support for what happens in my classroom is |
| 0 | 0 | | a. very high |
| 6 | 32 | | b. moderately high |
| 6 | 32 | | c. indifferent |
| 6 | 32 | | d. moderately low |
| 1 | 5 | | e. exceptionally low |
| 0 | 0 | | f. other |
| | | 9. | In general, the "physical characteristics" of the school are |
| 2 | 11 | | a. exceptionally good |
| 6 | 32 | | b. moderately good |
| 10 | 53 | | c. about average |
| 0 | 0 | | d. moderately bad |
| 0 | 0 | | e. exceptionally bad |
| 1 | 5 | | f. other |
| | | 10. | In general, the actual equipment available to me is |
| 2 | 11 | | a. exceptionally good |
| 8 | 42 | | b. moderately good |
| 7 | 37 | | c. about average |
| 2 | 11 | | d. moderately bad |
| 0 | 0 | | e. exceptionally bad |
| 0 | 0 | | f. other |
| | | 11. | In general, the financial support available to me for materials is |
| 3 | 16 | | a. exceptionally good |
| 7 | 37 | | b. moderately good |
| 5 | 26 | | c. about average |
| 1 | 5 | | d. moderately bad |
| 1 | 5 | | e. exceptionally bad |
| 2 | 11 | | f. other |

| FREQUENCY | % | |
|---|---|---|
| | | 12. The release time allowed for professional enrichment as a factor in my overall attitude is |
| 2 | 11 | a. exceptionally important |
| 3 | 10 | b. moderately important |
| 3 | 16 | c. about average |
| 6 | 32 | d. moderately unimportant |
| 2 | 11 | e. not important |
| 0 | 0 | f. no opinion |
| 3 | 16 | g. other |
| | | 13. The Library at the school as a support service is |
| 1 | 5 | a. exceptionally good |
| 0 | 0 | b. moderately good |
| 0 | 0 | c. about average |
| 0 | 0 | d. moderately bad |
| 0 | 0 | e. exceptionally bad |
| 0 | 0 | f. no opinion |
| 18 | 95 | g. other |
| | | 14. The Library at the school as a factor in my overall "morale" is |
| 0 | 0 | a. exceptionally important |
| 0 | 0 | b. moderately important |
| 0 | 0 | c. not very important |
| 0 | 0 | d. not important at all--I never use this service |
| 19 | 100 | e. other |
| | | 15. Communication between administration and teachers is |
| 0 | 0 | a. very good |
| 0 | 0 | b. moderately good |
| 4 | 21 | c. average |
| 6 | 32 | d. moderately poor |
| 7 | 37 | e. very poor |
| 2 | 10 | f. other |
| | | 16. My attitude toward my fellow teachers is |
| 10 | 53 | a. very goo |
| 5 | 26 | b. moderately good |
| 3 | 16 | c. indifferent |
| 1 | 5 | d. moderately poor |
| 0 | 0 | e. very poor |
| 0 | 0 | f. other |
| | | 17. My attitude toward myself as a teacher is that I am |
| 5 | 26 | a. very competent |
| 7 | 37 | b. somewhat competent |
| 4 | 21 | c. average |
| 0 | 0 | d. ineffective |
| 0 | 0 | e. incompetent |
| 3 | 16 | f. other |

| FREQUENCY | % | 18. Rank order the following areas in order in which you feel there is the greatest need for improvement or change. |
|---|---|---|
| 12 | 63.1 | a. Administration |
| 7 | 36.8 | b. Operation funds |
| 5 | 26.4 | c. Support services |
| 4 | 21.1 | d. Parent involvement |
| 2 | 10.6 | e. Materials |
| 5 | 26.3 | f. Teacher staff |

NOTE[1]: For question #18, the six response items have been arranged in the order in which the respondents ranked them.

NOTE[2]: The frequency numbers and the percentage indicate respondents who ranked each item as either #1 or #2 in terms of importance. While five respondents (26.3%) ranked Teacher Staff as either the area in greatest need of improvement or the area next to the greatest in need of improvement, eight respondents (42%) ranked it as the area in least need of improvement. This wide variance of response to Item #6 (teacher staff) makes the data on it difficult to interpret.

TABLE 4:
MODAL SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF RESPONSES
TO THE INVENTORY OF CAREER
ATTITUDES (N=19)

| | QUESTION | RESPONSE | PERCENT |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Attitude toward job | Moderately good-neutral | 79 |
| 2. | Number of factors affecting attitude | 2 or 3 factors | 68 |
| 3. | Specific attitudes affecting attitude | salary or lack of it | 42 |
| 4. | Relationship of my position to my attitude | not a factor | 42 |
| 5. | Person affecting my attitude | students & colleagues | 21 |
| 6. | Attitude could be changed | yes | 96 |
| 7. | Attitude toward administration | moderately poor | 47 |
| 8. | Administrative support for program | moderately low-moderately high | 96 |
| 9. | Physical characteristics of the school | moderately good | 85 |
| 10. | Equipment availability | average-moderately good | 79 |
| 11. | Financial support for materials | average-moderately good | 63 |
| 12. | Release time for professional enrichment as a factor in my attitude | moderately unimportant | 32 |
| 13. | Library as a service | no library | 95 |
| 14. | Library as a factor in my attitude | no | 100 |
| 15. | Communication between teachers & administration | moderately poor-very poor | 69 |
| 16. | Attitude toward my fellow teachers | very good | 53 |
| 17. | Attitude of myself as a teacher | somewhat competent-very competent | 63 |
| 18. | Need to improve | administration | 63 |

## THE RESULTS OF THE PERSONAL INTERVIEW

All faculty members who participated in the study were invited to meet individually or in groups with one of the two evaluators. Of the 19 faculty members who responded to the two questionnaires, 17 participated in the interview sessions. Each session lasted for approximately one hour. Concerns of the faculty fell into three areas: 1) administrative, 2) faculty and 3) program.

### Administrative Concerns

1. Communication - the faculty stated that communication lines to and from the administration were often lacking and that when communication did occur it appeared either inconsistent or insincere. This communication problem led to suspicion among the faculty that decisions regarding program areas were made without regard for faculty input.

   The faculty also stated that they felt "games" had to be played in order to get the administration's attention.

2. Program - faculty stated that they feel isolated and are improperly left to "run their own classrooms." This problem was felt to be an administrative one in that the administration is ultimately responsible for what goes on in the classroom. Individual faculty member conferences are rarely initiated by the administration and when they are an aura of chastisement prevails.

The faculty expressed concern regarding the need for evaluation of educational practices at the school conducted by an individual responsible for supervising and coordinating the educational program.

A major concern noted by the faculty during the interviews was the lack of carryover from classroom programs to the living units. Several reasons

for this situation were expressed including:

a) a lack of training in program areas for cottage staff.

b) an appropriate vehicle for coordination of training efforts between cottage and classroom was lacking.

3. Interpersonal relationships - the faculty felt that too often the administration lacked sensitivity for their (the faculty) ego or emotional needs. The chastisement of which they spoke was administered on the basis of complaints the administration received regarding them. Regardless of whether the complaints were minor or major, they were not "checked out" by the administration. Faculty felt that the failure to substantiate and treat fairly complaints, facilitated alienation among personnel.
Because of the interpersonal relationship between faculty and administration, real concerns of the faculty appear to be suppressed. There is a feeling among the faculty that even when problems are presented to the administration they are not given necessary attention and thus follow-up is either non-existent or inappropriate.

4. Employment practices and management - the faculty was generally concerned with the apparent lack of organizational structure and with employment practices. Specifically, they felt that:

a) the continuous ad for staff positions at the school which appeared in the local newspaper reflected negatively on the school.

b) permanent or anticipated long-term employment positions should not be filled by obviously temporary personnel such as summer college workers.

c) repair of classroom equipment is often inadequate or non-existent.

d) houseparents are dispensers of medication on a regular basis - this is viewed as improper. (More specifically there is a

feeling that there is maldispensing of medication on the part of the houseparents).

e) the faculty realizes that there are fiscal constraints on the school, but wish to be advised of these constraints perhaps through their faculty representative on the board.

f) the chain of command is ambiguous. Those assigned administrative responsibilities are not delegated corresponding authority.

Faculty Matters

1. Faculty rights - faculty feel that they should have the same academic rights as their colleagues in the public sector including the opportunity to achieve tenure, access to a formalized grievance procedure and objective and written evaluation of their work performance.

2. Salary - the faculty made several specific comments concerning salary and other pay-related matters:

   a) they are expected to stay in their work site during the lunch period; however, they are not paid during this time. They feel they should either be paid for this time or be allowed to leave.

   b) there exists no salary schedule

   c) there is no regard, either monetarily or otherwise, for seniority.

   d) there is no compensation, monetarily or otherwise, for meritorious service.

   e) there are inconsistencies in salaries and raises across personnel. For example, a new employee may receive a higher salary than his counterpart who has been employed at the school for a considerable period of time.

f) five cents per hour raises are inadequate and, in fact, insulting.

g) teacher aides with a college degree are paid more than teacher aides who hold no college degree.

3. Communication - faculty members felt that communication among themselves was poor. They felt that means for communication were lacking and that faculty meetings were not conducive to frankness. There was not harmony among faculty because units operated independently with no singular person, such as a program coordinator, with responsibility to unify them. The faculty also felt that in addition to a program coordinator who could facilitate good communication and provide educational leadership, the faculty representative to the board should be a full member and that board minutes should be taken and published.

Program Concerns

1. Supervision and Coordination - the faculty felt that there was a general lack of educational supervision and coordination. While the deaf-blind unit and P.E. unit have designated supervisors, the other units do not. Faculty feel overwhelmed with the problems which the children present and uncertain about the teaching methodologies they are employing.

   Staffings should be conducted on a regular basis and in a systematic manner.

   Faculty indicated a need to establish educational priorities through interaction with the faculty and the administration.

2. Hope School Students - the faculty felt genuine concern for the children and stated that the administration did also. However, they

did feel that certain conditions needed to improve. Specifically:

a) better clothing for the children.

b) staffings must be held for the benefit of the children.

c) children should not be transferred to other schools without input from the sending Hope School teacher.

d) staff trained in dealing with behavior problems other than nursing staff.

e) children need more care-taking attention. There is not sufficient staff nor time to adequately meet the hygiene needs of the children.

3. Improved selectivity in providing in-service must be exercised to insure that the persons providing the in-service have expertise on the topics which the faculty have selected.

4. Ancillary services - the faculty felt the psychologists were essentially of little use. One of the two psychologists rarely made an appearance and the other psychologist, who made regular visits, was ineffective.

Increased involvement of Occupational and Physical Therapists in programing and staffing, was indicated as a need by the faculty.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of this evaluation, and based on the information it generated, several recommendations seem appropriate. However, before listing our recommendations, we feel it is necessary to reiterate some previous comments which will serve as guidelines forevaluating and interpreting the recommendations. Foremost among these is the limited nature and scope of the evaluation. Both the questionnaires and interviews were directed at teaching personnel, and therefore do not reflect the views of all employees of the Hope School. It should not be presupposed that the views and attitudes among other employees are either the same as or different from those of the teaching faculty. A second point is that this evaluation did not involve investigation of classroom practices, or records pertaining to such. It must be recognized that attitudes among teachers are contributed to by teacher behavior, the behavior of the children they teach and the success of their classroom practices.

In regard to both areas, it is recommended that consideration be given to:

1. Employing or appointing a programing coordinator. This individual's responsibility would revolve around;
   a. Providing liasion between administration and faculty.
   b. Development and coordination of a consistent and appropriate approach to educational programing.
   c. Evaluating teachers based on an objective evaluation procedure.
   d. Assuring that educational practice is in accord with federal, state and school policy.
2. Establishing interdisciplinary teams across life areas for programing purposes including:
   a. Administrative responsibility
   b. Participants

Recommendations - continued

c. Types of information

d. Responsibility for implementation.

3. Improved public relations:

a. Elimination of the ad in the local newspaper. Potential employees could be notified through professional journals, state employment agencies, etc. . . .

b. Increased volunteerism through local schools and community organizations.

c. Increased involvement and participation in professional presentations. This could serve two purposes: faculty in-service and professional awareness of the quality of life at Hope School.

4. In-service training:

a. Based on indicated needs by faculty.

b. Participation of available resources such as universities, state agencies, etc. . . . with appropriate expertise.

5. The development of a faculty handbook which would:

a. Clarify the role and responsibility of teachers and teacher aides.

b. Stipulate personnel practices including tenure and salary.

c. Outline a procedure for resolving grievance matters.

6. On-going evaluation:

a. Students - a systematic approach based on assessment of student gains in specific skills within curriculum areas.

b. Third party evaluation of educational practices being employed in classrooms.

c. Future evaluation should include as part of the evaluative base the results and recommendations of previous evaluations. Any recommendations proposed in this report which are eventually implemented should be evaluated within the context of faculty morale.

Recommendations - Continued

In closing, we wish to say that it is uncommon for educational facilities such as Hope School to conduct an evaluation of this nature, even though such evaluation should be commonplace. Therefore, the reader of this report should recognize that instigation of an evaluation on the part of the Hope School administration into the area of staff morale is a positive effort toward improvement. We would also like to note that the attitude of the administration and teaching faculty was one of complete cooperation during all phases of the evaluation.